

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 07366 301555Z
ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY PARGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USBERLIN UNN
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FM LINE SLD READ FM AMEMBASSY
VICE USMISSION)

E.O11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GE
SUBJECT: NEW GDR REGULATION ON DAY VISITS TO EAST BERLIN
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 07366 301555Z

1. THE GDR ON DECEMBER 30 ANNOUNCED CHANGES IN THE
GDR PASSPORT LAW AFFECTING DAY VISITS FROM WEST BERLIN
TO EAST BERLIN. AS OF JANUARY 1, 1977, CITIZENS OF
OTHER STATES AND STATELESS PERSONS WILL BE REQUIRED TO
PURCHASE A DAY VISA, TO BE ISSUED AT THE BORDER CROSSING

POINT. THE VISA WILL BE GOOD UNTIL MIDNIGHT OF THE DAY OF ISSUANCE. EXEMPTED ARE CITIZENS OF THE FRG. AND "PERSONS WITH PERMANENT RESIDENCY IN WEST BERLIN", FOR WHOM THE CURRENT REGULATIONS REMAIN IN FORCE.

2. GDR MFA WEST BERLIN EXPERT MITDANK CALLED ON ITALIAN, TURKISH, AND GREEK EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES ON DECEMBER 29 TO BRIEF THEM ON THE NEW REGULATION, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE THESE THREE COUNTRIES HAVE THE LARGEST FOREIGN POPULATIONS IN WEST BERLIN. MITDANK TOLD THEM THAT IN ADDITION TO THE M6.50 WHICH TRAVELERS TO EAST BERLIN MUST EXCHANGE FOR THEIR STAY, THE NEW VISA FEE WOULD BE M5. HE SAID THAT EXEMPTIONS TO THE NEW VISA RULES WOULD BE MADE IN SEVERAL CATEGORIES: 1) MEMBERS OF ALLIED MILITARY MISSIONS IN WEST BERLIN 2) CITIZENS FROM COUNTRIES WITH "APPROPRIATE" (PRESUMABLY CONSULAR) AGREEMENTS WITH THE GDR; AND 3) MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ACCREDITED TO THE GDR. THERE IS ONE OTHER CATEGORY, WHICH IS NOT CLEAR TO US AT PRESENT.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THE NEW GDR ORDINANCE WILL NOT AFFECT MEMBERS OF THE USMISSION IN WEST BERLIN, IT WILL APPLY TO US TOURISTS MAKING DAY VISITS TO EAST BERLIN. UNDER THE OLD REGULATIONS, TOURISTS MAKING DAY VISITS TO EAST BERLIN. UNDER THE OLD REGULATIONS, TOURISTS WERE REQUIRED TO CHANGE M6.50 AT THE BORDER, BUT NOT TO PURCHASE A VISA. NOW THEY WILL BE ASKED TO PAY M5.00 FOR A VISA. ANOTHER CHANGE IN THE NEW REGULATION COMES IN THE DURATION OF THE VISA: RATHER THAN EXTENDING FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BERLIN 07366 301555Z

FULL 24 HOURS, IT NOW WILL EXPIRE AT MIDNIGHT ON THE DAY IT WAS ISSUED.

5. WE PLAN TO MEET AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 30 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME WESTERN MISSIONS TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS LATEST REGULATION. POLANSKY

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